

THE OAK LEAF

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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SPRING FIELD MEETING - TO BE AT POND MOUNTAIN NATURAL AREA

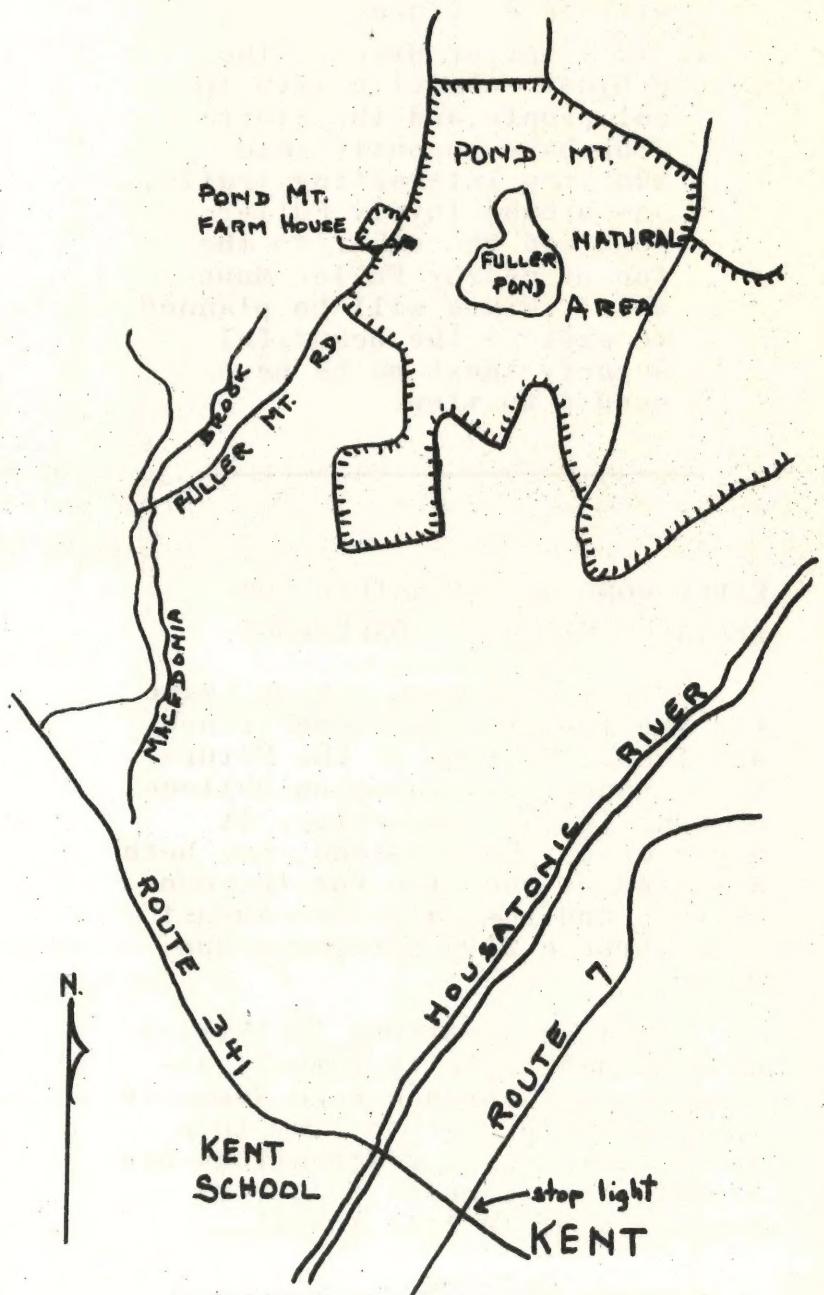
All Chapter members, their guests and friends are invited to attend part or all of this general membership meeting to be held on the grounds of the lovely Pond Mountain Natural Area located in Kent between Macedonia Brook State Park and the Housatonic River. This 722-acre tract has been given to the Pond Mountain Trust by Miss Myra Hopson and is under a management program with The Nature Conservancy.

TIME: Saturday, May 4, 1968
at 11:00 AM

PLACE: Pond Mountain Natural Area, Kent, Connecticut

Directions: From the center of Kent at the junction of Rte 341 and Rte 7 (at the traffic light) continue west on Rte 341 past the Kent School to a right turn with signs to Macedonia Brook State Park (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles); then turn right and proceed north, following Park signs (about $\frac{1}{3}$ mile); then turn right and cross Macedonia Brook and continue northerly up Fuller Mountain Road to the top of a long hill (about $\frac{3}{4}$ mi.) and TNC signs just at the crest; parking will be on the right.

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SPRING FIELD MEETING
(cont. from page 1)

PROGRAM:

An informal Chapter meeting at 11:00 AM will include Progress Reports and any items Chapter members may wish to present.

Luncheon will be at 12:00 noon at the Pond Mountain Farmhouse, the lovely home of Miss Hopson. Bring your own box lunch; hot coffee will be provided.

Field Trips or Hikes: The Project Committee with local people and the Sierra Club have recently laid two very interesting trails, one around lovely Fuller Pond and the other to the top of nearby Fuller Mountain. Hikes will be planned to explore the beautiful scenery these paths have opened to view.

EARLY WORD ON THE NATURE CONSERVANCY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Plans have been taking shape for the 19th National Conference and Annual Meeting of The Nature Conservancy. Southampton College of Long Island University, at Southampton, Long Island, has been selected as the site for the Conference and the dates are August 23rd through 25th (Friday - Sunday).

College dormitory facilities will be available to members attending, but advance word suggests that if you prefer to stay in a motel, very early reservations are a must. Southampton is a very popular spot in late August.

SAVE THE MARSHES FOR A RAINY DAY

Spring floods in some areas have been proving the importance of the banker's adage, "Save for a rainy day."

A marsh is just like a bank for water. When we have lots of rain, it saves up the water rather than spending it on reckless living. Instead of letting the water rush wildly downstream to flood houses and stores and factories, a marsh stores the water and lets it seep gently down into the water table. Then when a dry spell comes along, the water is right there where you want it for your water supply ... not down in the ocean months ago.

By filling our inland wetlands and building upon them, we've been robbing our own banks.

We have been wrecking our natural reservoirs, the flood plains and marshes and swamps ... and we will have to turn right around and spend millions of dollars for flood control and artificial reservoirs that we used to have for free.

It just doesn't make any kind of fiscal sense.

Why not let our wetlands quietly sit there being useful and beautiful, instead of filling them in and having to spend extra tax money to prevent flooding and to get an adequate water supply? We have been taking our wetlands for granted entirely too long - like a movie queen who thinks her beauty will last forever and never provides for the future.

Right now, before it's too late, let's stop the filling of our wetlands ... let's save our marshes for a rainy day.

(From the weekly conservation column of the Connecticut Conservation Association by Polly Bradley.)

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MEADOW WOODS NATURAL AREA: A New Acquisition in Essex

A 97-acre parcel of woodland in Essex was donated to The Nature Conservancy on March 26th. This Nature Preserve will be known as Meadow Woods Natural Area.

The land was given by Earl L. Canfield of Essex, and lies north of Dennison Road. It creates the first natural area in Essex and is the largest transfer of its kind in the lower Connecticut River Valley in recent years.

The land contains a ridge, wooded slopes, a small meadow and is partly traversed by a small watercourse. It is to be kept in its natural state in order to preserve the wild habitat and to provide a nature workshop for the observation, study and teaching of ecology, conservation and the natural sciences.

Two instruments were accepted by Dr. Richard H. Goodwin for The Nature Conservancy: one was a deed of a fractional share of this 97.2 acre parcel and the other was a lease of Mr. Canfield's remaining interest. The lease states that The Nature Conservancy "shall maintain the premises solely as a nature preserve for scientific, educational, charitable and aesthetic purposes and shall keep the premises entirely in their natural state with minimal disturbance of habitat or plant or animal populations."

In acceptance, Dr. Goodwin noted the gift as a significant step in meeting a vital need in southeastern Connecticut to preserve significant natural areas for open space. He also stressed the need for such areas in connection with educational programs for persons of all ages.

Much of the preliminary work on this project was done by a fellow Chapter member, Attorney Russell L. Brenneman, formerly of Essex.

Mr. and Mrs. Canfield have been active in conservation efforts for the lower Connecticut Valley for a number of years. Their belief in the value of this tract as a Natural Area was summarized by them as follows: 1) Wildlife Refuge - a natural woodland where wild creatures can live undisturbed; 2) Historical - a memorial to the early settlers whose labors have left their mark upon the land in the remains of stone walls and fences; 3) Educational - a nature workshop for the observation, study and teaching of ecological conservation and the natural sciences; 4) Preservation of the watershed; 5) Scenic - a place of repose in a tract of woodland which climbs to a semi-circle of vistas south and east over the Connecticut River.

The lower Connecticut River Valley will be greatly enhanced by the dedication of this lovely Natural Area. It is a vital bulwark to the increasing pressures of suburbanization.

The Chapter extends its appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Earl L. Canfield.

STUPIDITY STREET

I saw with open eyes
Singing birds sweet
Sold in the shops
For the people to eat,
Sold in the shops of
Stupidity Street.

I saw in vision
The worm in the wheat
And in the shops nothing
For the people to eat.
Nothing for sale on
Stupidity Street.

Ralph Hodgson

MIANUS VALLEY PROJECT ADVANCES

The Mianus River Valley - site of a preservation project planned to become the state's largest Nature Preserve - moved a step closer toward reality on March 8th.

A key 130-acre piece, the first purchase in this project in the northwestern corner of Stamford, was transferred to the State of Connecticut from The Nature Conservancy last month. This tract just south of the New York State line was kept out of the hands of developers in 1966 through a quick down payment by the Conservancy. The Conservancy was able to step in with critical funds and hold this land until the slower governmental processes obtained state funding. Through state legislative action and federal government matching funds the necessary monies to complete the purchase of this tract have been realized and transfer of the Conservancy's holding interest was completed.

It is the beginning of a more than 1,000-acre Preserve planned to stretch along four miles of this undeveloped tumbling stream whose sides are banked with forests dating back to colonial times.

MARCH FOR THE MARSHLANDS

We hear of many different "marches" in various cities about the nation these days, but one march was made not very long ago in Connecticut to save a salt water marshland area.

On a bitter frosty and windy day on February some 200 conservationists from many different organizations (including TNC), led by Mr. Peter H. Borgemeister of the Madison Land Trust, escorted Mr. Donald C. Mathews, Director of the Connecticut Park and Forest Commission on a stroll around Meigs Point, an area of about 200 acres at the eastern end of Hammonasset State Park. Mostly marsh, the point has a unique climate of its own - almost alpine, because of its exposure.

The purpose was to convince the state that the area should be more formally dedicated than it has been to date as "a wildlife natural area".

The Madison Land Trust has this Spring set out a variety of bird houses and has been recently assured by Mr. Mathews that the area will be designated and marked as a Natural Area. It is further hoped that soon signs will designate the area so that the many visitors to the State Park this summer will know about Meigs Point Natural Area.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

National Office: 1522 K Street, NW
Washington, D. C. 20005

Conn. Chapter Office: 151 Brookdale Rd.
Stamford, Conn. 06903

Chapter Chairman: Mr. Charles A. Clark
2 Mortimer Drive
Old Greenwich, Conn. 06780

Newsletter Editor: Mrs. Richard M. Bowers
Box 147
Old Mystic, Conn. 06372

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The Editor invites any comments concerning, or articles for, the Chapter Newsletter.